

Message Text

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NODIS

USUN FOR SCRANTON ONLY; LONDON FOR SEITZ

FOLLOWING REPEAT GENEVA 9710 ACTION SECSTATE DTD 06 DEC

QTE

S E C R E T GENEVA 9710

NODIS

FOR AMB SCHAUFLE FROM WISNER

DEPT PASS LONDON FOR SEITZ

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR RH UK

SUBJECT: RHODESIA CONFERENCE: ROUNDUP OF DEC 6 ACTIVITIES

1. BRITISH HAD FULL SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS DEC 6, BUT
COULD POINT TO LITTLE IN THE WAY OF POSITIVE RESULTS
BY THE END OF THE DAY. SUCCESSIVE BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS
HELD THIS MORNING WITH MUZOREWA, PATRIOTIC FRONT AND
SITHOLE DELEGATION HEADS, PRINCIPALLY TO GET CLEARER IDEA
OF THEIR VIEWS REGARDING NATURE OF UK ROLE. ONE AND HALF

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HOOR RESTRICTED WORKING SESSION WITH ALL HEADS OF

DELEGATION THIS AFTERNOON RESUMED YESTERDAY'S DISCUSSIONS ON THREE NATIONALIST PROPOSALS FOR INTERIM GOVERNMENT AND WAS FOLLOWED BY UK BRIEFING FOR OBSERVERS. RICHARD DEPARTED FOR LONDON AND IS NOT EXPECTED BACK UNTIL WEDNESDAY MORNING WHEN, ACCORDING TO UK EMBASSY IN PRETORIA, SMITH IS ALSO SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE. ACCORDING TO ROBIN BYATT, ASSESSMENT RICHARD IS TAKING TO LONDON DIFFERS LITTLE FROM THAT HE SHARED WITH ASST. SECRETARY REINHARDT DECEMBER 3 (GENEVA 9668).

2. IN RESPONSE TO UK QUESTIONING ON ROLE HIS DELEGATION ENVISAGED FOR UK IN INTERIM GOVERNMENT, GORDON CHAVANDUKA (SPEAKING ON BEHALF OF MUZOREWA WHO HAD NOT YET RETURNED) SAID ANC'S PLAN PRESENTLY CALLS FOR UK GOVERNOR TO EXERCISE EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS ONLY IN THE AREA OF SECURITY AS HEAD OF PROPOSED NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL. CHAVANDUKA EXPLAINED THAT ANC PLAN PROMISED ON ELECTIONS FOR INTERIM PRIME MINISTER. IF AN FAILS TO GAIN ACCEPTANCE OF ELECTIONS, THEN IT WOULD PROBABLY TAKE VIEW THAT UK ROLE SHOULD BE VERY SUBSTANTIAL.

3. PATRIOTIC FRONT, UNDER SIMILAR LINE OF UK QUESTIONING, ADMITTED THAT ITS PAPER CALLS FOR RESIDENT COMMISSIONER TO PLAY TITULAR ROLE, SUMBOLIZING ENGAGEMENT OF UK RESPONSIBILITY, BUT WITH NO REAL AUTHORITY. ONLY CIRCUMSTANCE WHERE ACTIVE ROLE ENVISAGED IS IN EVENT AUTHORITY OF PRIME MINISTER AND HIS COUNCIL BREAKS DOWN, BUT HERE PATRIOTIC FRONT ACKNOWLEDGED THAT ITS PAPER FAILED TO SOLVE PROBLEM OF HOW UK COMMISSIONER WOULD MOVE IN TO FILL THE POWER VACUUM. DESPITE FLAWS IN ITS PROPOSAL, THE PATRIOTIC FRONT MADE CLEAR THAT IT COULD NOT FORSEE ANY INTERIM GOVERNMENT IN WHICH UK WOULD BE ENGAGED AS ACTIVE PLAYER.

4. IN BILATERAL WITH SITHOLE DELEGATION, ACTION DELEGATION HEARD MALINDI TOLD BRITISH THAT HIS PAPER, WHICH INVISAGES ALMOST NO UK ROLE, WAS PREDICATED ON ASSUMPTION THAT BRITISH NOT PREPARED TO ACCEPT ACTIVE RESPONSIBILITY. MALINDI WAS THEREFORE SURPRISED BY CROSLAND'S REPLY TO PARLIAMNET LAST WEEK INDICATING THAT, ON THE CONTRARY,

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UK WAS SO PREPARED. SITHOLE PLAN FOR ROTATING PREMIERSHIP WITHIN A FIVE-MAN PRESIDUM WAS, HE SAID, BASED ON RECOGNITION THAT A POWER VACUUM WOULD INEVITABLY EXIST WITHIN INTERIM GOVERNMENT AND THAT BEST SOLUTION WAS TO INSTITUTIONALIZE IT. IF ITS PROPOSALS NOT ACCEPTED BY CONFERENCE, SITHOLE DELEGATION, LIKE MUZOREWA'S, WOULD ENVISAGE UK HAVING TO PLAY A VERY SUBSTANTIAL ROLE IN INTERIM GOVERNMENT, BUT IT HAD NOT GIVEN THIS IDEA

MUCH THOUGHT.

5. HAVING FAILED TO DRAW DELEGATIONS OUT ON DETAILS OF WHAT THEY ENVISAGE AS UK ROLE, BRITISH INTEND TO PURSUE SUBJECT FURTHER IN ANOTHER ROUND OF BILATERALS DEC 7

AND MAY ALSO ATTEMPT TO INITIATE DISCUSSION ON MECHANISMS FOR DRAWING UP AND RATIFYING THE INDEPENDENCE CONSTITUTION.

6. MOST OF AFTERNOON WORK SESSION WITH HEADS OF DELEGATION WAS TAKEN UP WITH DISCUSSION, ALL CRITICAL, OF MUZOREWA'S PROPOSALS FOR INTERIM GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS. PATRIOTIC FRONT WENT OUT OF ITS WAY TO REDRESS IMPRESSION LEFT BY THEIR STATEMENT ON SATURDAY THAT ZIMBABWEANS NEEDED "MORE EDUCATION" BEFORE THEY COULD VOTE RESPONSIBLY. INSTEAD, FRONT ARGUED THAT CONDITIONS WERE NOT CONDUCIVE TO ELECTIONS FOR INTERIM GOVERNMENT SINCE RHODESIA NOW IN STATE OF EMERGENCY. MAIN POINT OF INTEREST WAS PARTRIDGE (ACTING FOR ABSENT VAN DER BYL) WHO INTERVENED FREQUENTLY IN TODAY'S DEBATE, PRIMARILY TO HEAP SCORN ON MUZOREWA'S PROPOSAL. BUT THOUGH PARTRIDGE REFERRED DISPARAGINGLY TO ELECTIONS AS A "BEAUTY CONTEXT," HE REPEATEDLY DUCKED DIRECT QUESTIONS FROM OTHER DELEGATIONS AS TO WHETHER RHODESIA FRONT CATEGORICALLY REJECTED INTERIM ELECTIONS AND ALSO ASSISTED CHAVANDUKA IN PRODDING SITHOLE AND PATRIOTIC FRONT REPS ON THEIR REASONS FOR THWARTING DEMOCRATIC PROCESS. TOWARD CLOSE OF SESSION, DELEGATIONS LED BY MALINDI AGAIN TURNED TO QUESTIONING PATRIOTIC FRONT ON MECHANICS OF APPOINTING PRIME MINISTER UNDER ITS SCHEME. FRONT STATED FLATLY THAT IT WAS NOT PREPARED TO SAY AT THIS STAGE HOW APPOINTMENT WOULD BE MADE AND STUCK TO ITS POSITION THAT FIRST TASK OF CONFERENCE IS TO DECIDE THE STRUCTURE AND NOT THE PERSONALITIES OF

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THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT.

6. RICHARD'S EVENING BRIEFING FOR FRONT LINE OBSERVERS THIS EVENING WAS SHORTER AND LESS WELL ATTENDED THAN EARLIER SESSIONS (CHONA WAS CONSPICUOUSLY ABSENT - HE WAS VISITING US.) BRITISH AGAIN SENSED THAT MOST OBSERVERS STILL LOOK

TO BRITAIN TO PUT FORWARD ITS OWN IDEAS ON INTERIM GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE, ARGUING THAT OTHERWISE VARIOUS DELEGATIONS WOULD NEVER PERCEIVE POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVES TO THEIR OWN PROPOSALS. AT SAME TIME BRITISH WERE TOLD THAT WHATEVER THEY PUT FORWARD SHOULD BE BROAD ENOUGH TO KEEP ALL OPTIONS OPEN. BRITISH ARE THEREFORE AT A LOSS AS TO HOW THEY CAN ACCOMMODATE THESE TWO CONFLICTING THREADS OF ADVICE THEY ARE RECEIVING

FROM THE OBSERVERS.

7. WHEN ASKED WHAT ASSESSMENT IVOR RICHARD WAS TAKING WITH HIM TO LONDON, ROBIN BYATT SAID THAT RICHARD'S VIEWS HAD NOT ALTERED IN ANY SIGNIFICANT WAY SINCE HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH ASST SECRETARY REINHARDT ON DEC 3. ASSUMING THAT RHODESIANS PRESENT PAPER UK EXPECTS, CONFERENCE WILL BE LEFT WITH FOUR PROPOSALS THAT ARE SO FAR APART AS TO BE IRRECONCILABLE. APART FROM SOME VERY TENTATIVE AND CONDITIONAL NOISES FROM THE MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE DELEGATIONS, THERE IS NO INDICATION THAT ANY OF THE DELEGATIONS ARE PREPARED TO BACK AWAY FROM THEIR POSITIONS. THE PROBLEM FACING THE BRITISH, AND THE US FOR THAT MATTER, IS HOW TO GET THE DISCUSSION STARTED AGAIN ON A MORE USEFUL AND HOPEFUL BASIS.

8. BYATT WAS AWARE OF SCHAUFELLE'S SCHEDULED MEETING WITH ANTHONY DUFF IN LONDON AT WHICH HE ASSUMED THE QUESTION OF PARALLEL US AND UK APPROACHES TO THE FRONT LINE PRESIDENTS WOULD BE DISCUSSED. HE HAD RECEIVED A CABLE FROM LONDON INDICATING THAT THE FOREIGN OFFICE WANTED TO LOOK MORE CLOSELY AT THE PROPOSED SUBSTANCE OF ANY PARALLEL APPROACHES AND HOW THAT MIGHT AFFECT ANY SUBSEQUENT APPROACHES THAT THE BRITISH MIGHT THEMSELVES WANT TO MAKE. HE SUGGESTED THAT THE UK MIGHT WANT TO DELAY SUCH APPROACHES UNTIL IT HAD DEVELOPED FURTHER
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ITS OWN PROPOSALS ON THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE THAT COULD ALSO BE COMMUNICATED TO THE FRONT LINE PRESIDENTS. CATTO UNQTE ROBINSON

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